



LifeSpot ... Live the Word

Imagine it

In Exodus 3:1–6, you can read about Moses and the burning bush in 40 seconds. But wait. Why read and move on? Why not stay for 20 minutes or more, to imagine the scene in its illuminating detail? Put yourself there, on the sand, one yard from the bush, in Moses' shoes. Feel the heat from the flames. Experience the charge of a self-combusting, non-burning bush. See God's angel. Hear the Voice calling your name. Take your sandals off—let your bare feet touch holy ground. Sense the sacredness of God rolling through your body from your toes to your head. Then listen. Like Moses, discern if God is calling you to fulfill a mission of deliverance for someone today.

Source it

Roughly 10 per cent of the New Testament consists of the Old Testament. Veins of gold flow from the New back to the Old. *Example.* Hebrews 10:5 reports what Jesus said when he came into the world: "You prepared a body for me." A footnote tells us Jesus was quoting Psalm 40:6. But in Psalm 40 we find an unexpected reading—"my ears you have opened." Why the difference? With a Bible cross-reference, we're drawn back to the source, to Exodus 21:6. There, a servant in love with his master turns down his freedom. "I wish to serve you for life." He submits to a ritual—his ear lobes are drilled through. He's marked for life as a servant, his body pierced and submitted forever. Suddenly, we see our Savior in a new light, and we're on our knees saying, "Thank you, Jesus!"

Expand it

As the sun rises, a man stands on the beach. He shouts *Good morning! Catch anything? ... Try the other side. . . . Now come, have breakfast with me.* See John 21:1–14. Imagine Peter. He sees the familiar frame, he hears the familiar voice. Then he sees the unexpected fire. The fire of burning coals. Searing memory returns, from days before—the courtyard at night, a fire of burning coals, a sin of explosive denial. John 18:17–27. On the beach, Peter recoils from the charcoal fire. But Jesus breaks bread and hands it to his disciple. They eat. Then, they walk and talk. Jesus transforms the fire that sears into a fire that warms. As you enter the Word, will you find warmth in that fire today?

Compare it

Human beings were created a little lower than angels. We know this from classic translations of Psalm 8:5. But wait. A footnote gives an alternative translation: a little lower than *God*. More than half of common Bible versions in English translate it this way. A Bible concordance confirms the word is *Elohim*, a name for God. Now what do you think? You are far from a coincidental product of natural selection. You came fully formed from the heart and mind of *Elohim!* And in your original design, you were made just a little lower than the One who created you. Understanding this, let's sing out loud the conclusion of Psalm 8—"Oh LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

Deep-study it

In your Bible study, sometimes go deep. Spend a month in one book, with one question in mind. For example, take the book of Acts and ask, “What can I learn about the Holy Spirit?” or “How can I become a witness for Jesus?” Or, spend several months with one power-theme in the Bible, such as the Glory of God. With this subject, your journey will include Exodus, 1 Samuel, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Luke, John, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians and Revelation. As you study, the Glory of God will proceed from the pages and pierce the night you are going through. Then it will overflow to people around you. Christ the Word will become real—because you have seen his Glory (John 1).

Accept it

“Don’t put out the Holy Spirit’s fire.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19 (NIRV). Those times when the Spirit wants to arrive, and does arrive—at those times don’t be afraid! When you’re in the Word and the experience lights a flame of passion for God—for holiness—receive the blessing. Don’t suppress it, don’t stamp it out. The journey from the mind to the heart has been called the longest journey in the world. When God’s Spirit completes that journey in you, welcome it. Praise God for it. Confess the sins that God points out, and by his power be done with them. “Throw out everything tainted with evil.” 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (MSG). “God is the God who gives peace. May he make you holy through and through.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NIRV).

Act on it

Here’s good counsel: Be on guard against “letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear!” James 1:22 (MSG). What a tragedy if, day after day, I throw a Bible verse at my mind and then rush off to obviously more important things. Five minutes later, I can barely remember the verse I read! Take a promise like Exodus 15:26—“I am the LORD who heals you” (NIRV). These words are worth clinging to for the day. Pray over them. Make them personal. “Here’s what I need healing for now, Lord.” Come back to the promise several times through the day. Believe it. Share it with someone in your life. This is what it means to live the Word.

Do it today

Breathe. Eat. Drink. Sleep. Wash. Dress. Think. Feel. Speak. There are certain things we do every day. Why? Because we have to. Because we want to. Because we’re human. Because it’s life. When we take on God’s life, we add something more—we feed mind and soul with God’s Word, and we do it today. “Give us this day our daily bread.” In John 6:25–58, Jesus explains that this “bread” is his own intimate life and vitality. “I am the bread of life. . . . Those who feed on this bread will live forever.” It’s not monthly bread or weekly bread. It’s daily bread—like manna, fresh for *this day*. I could feed on it once a month or once a week, but that will leave me malnourished and stale. Here’s a beautiful testimony—“I’ve treasured his words more than my daily bread.” Job 23:12 (NIRV).